

at the Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology, Oxford, was naturally preoccupied with the problem of control, and research on the habits of the species was built up on this central theme. For example, a survey of nests was undertaken with the object of discovering whether the pigeons could be controlled in their breeding quarters; plumage was studied to obtain a clue to the migration problem; a knowledge of the relative density of the population was obviously desirable; and a similar knowledge of the feeding habits and feeding grounds was essential for the main purpose in view. The work on control has now been closed and it is possible to knit together the results of research on the biological side, which together form a study of the effect of human activities on one species of bird. Although the wood pigeon is as wild and unapproachable as any member of the British fauna, it would be difficult to name any animal the life-history of which is more closely interwoven with that of man. This life-history has been described by M. K. Colquhoun in an account which should be of interest not only to ecologists but also to those associated with the practice of agriculture and forestry (Agricultural Research Council. Report Series No. 10. London: H.M.S.O. 3s. net).

#### Material Culture of a Micronesian Atoll

KAPINGAMARANGI, an atoll south of the Caroline Islands and just north of the equator, was chosen as the field for an expedition to Micronesia, since it was known to be inhabited by a Polynesian stock. The people are taller and more robust than the Micronesians, with typically Polynesian brown skin and wavy or curly hair, and they are friendly and hospitable. There are thirty-three islets on the reef around the central lagoon, with a population of more than five hundred. This atoll, then, formed a highly compact area for an intensive survey—and how intensive it was is shown by an account of "Material Culture of Kapingamarangi", by Te Rangi Hiroa (Peter H. Buck) (Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu; Bull. 200; pp. 291; 1951). The field has been covered minutely, and the profuse illustrations are of high merit; in fact, the whole publication serves as a model of how such a survey should be presented. It is interesting to find a community nowadays living such a balanced life. They are isolated, but not entirely so; they are self-supporting, healthy and happy, and what outside culture—social and material—they now desire can be supplied by their outside contacts. Let us hope that this balance is not upset by so-called civilization.

#### Library Catalogue of the Timber Development Association

THE Timber Development Association, Ltd., has at its headquarters (21 College Hill, London, E.C.1) a library containing more than a thousand books treating of matters of importance in the timber and wood-working industries, and so forth. The titles of these books are given in the "Library Catalogue" (pp. 54), the third edition of which appeared in April 1950 and was reprinted in February 1951. The catalogue does not include any of the many brochures, pamphlets, and trade catalogues which may be inspected at the headquarters. The catalogue is drawn up on the usual lines, and forms a valuable aid to those who are associated with timber development.

#### World Power Conference: Annual Report for 1950

THE annual report of the World Power Conference for 1950 (pp. 22; London: World Power Conference, 1951) records the admission of Iceland and Israel to membership at the 1950 meeting of the International Executive Council, and national committees have been formed in both countries. A brief chronicle of the Fourth World Power Conference is appended to the report, and the transactions of the Conference are being prepared for publication. The International Executive Committee protested unsuccessfully against the decision of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations to transfer the World Power Conference from the list of organizations having category-B consultative status to the Secretary-General's Register. A list of publications as well as the statement of accounts is appended to the report, the income and expenditure account showing a deficit of £261 on the year.

#### "Runs in a Sequence of Observations"

REFERRING to the communication under this title published in *Nature* of September 29, p. 557, Prof. P. V. Krishna Iyer writes: "The determinantal difference equation should be read as follows: The difference equation reduces to a determinant of the  $k^2$  order given by

$$\|A_{rs}\| \varphi(m-2) = 0,$$

where  $A_{rs}$  is a  $k \times k$  matrix such that when  $r \neq s$ , all rows excepting the  $s$ th row are zero, the  $s$ th row being  $[-prt - prt \dots -prt]$ . When  $r = s$ , the  $r$ th row is  $[-prt - prt \dots (E-pr) \dots -prt]$ , the diagonal elements are  $[E E E \dots E-pr) \dots E]$ , all the other terms being zero".

#### University of London

THE following announcements have been made by the University of London. Mr. A. G. Smith has been appointed to the University readership in applied thermodynamics tenable at the Imperial College of Science and Technology. Doctorates have been conferred as follows: *D.Sc.*, J. G. Boswell (King's College), Miss M. S. Lesslie (Bedford College), Miss L. M. Pickford (University College) and F. L. Warren (Imperial College of Science and Technology); *D.Sc.(Eng.)*, F. W. Preston (external student).

#### Announcements

MR. BEN SMITH, national organizer of the Association of Scientific Workers, has been appointed general secretary of the Association in succession to Mr. T. Ainley.

THE new laboratories of the British Food Manufacturing Industries Research Association at Randalls Road, Leatherhead, will be opened by Lady Engledow on November 8.

A BRITISH Commonwealth Scientific Official Conference will be held in Australia in 1952. This is the first time the Conference has been held outside the United Kingdom; the last Conference met in London in 1946. The Conference will open in Canberra on February 18, and will close in Melbourne on March 7; the formal sessions will be broken by visits to enable delegates to study problems of Australian development. Local arrangements for the Conference are in the hands of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, 314 Albert Street, East Melbourne.